

REMARKS

Claims 1-12 and 15-22 are pending; claims 1, 5 and 15 are rejected; and claims 2-12 and 15-22 are objected to in this application. Claims 1, 3, 6, 10-12 and 15-16 are amended; and claim 2 is cancelled hereby.

Responsive to the objection to claims 5, 10-12 and 15, Applicants indicate that the objection to claim 5 is believed to be in error and that the Examiner had intended to object to claim 6. Further, Applicants have amended claims 6, 10-12 and 15. Applicants have amended claims 6, 10-12 and 15 by removing the term “refining” and inserting the words “mechanically treating.” For the foregoing reasons, Applicants submit that claims 6, 10-12 and 15 are now in condition for allowance, which is hereby respectfully requested.

Responsive to the rejection of claims 1 and 5 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,665,205 (Srivatsa et al.), Applicants have amended claim 1 and submit that claims 1 and 5 are now in condition for allowance. Applicants have amended claim 1 by placing the limitation of claim 2 therein. Since it had been determined that claim 2 would be allowable if placed in independent form, the placing of the limitation of claim 2 into claim 1 should thereby place claim 1, and claim 5 depending therefrom, in condition for allowance, which is hereby respectfully requested.

Responsive to the rejection of claims 1, 5 and 15 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,096,539 (Allan), Applicants have amended claim 1 and submit that claims 1, 5 and 15 are now in condition for allowance. Applicants have placed the limitation of claim 2, which has been indicated would be allowable if rewritten in independent form, into claim 1 thereby placing claim 1, and claims 5 and 15 depending therefrom, in condition for allowance, which is hereby respectfully requested.

Applicants thank the Examiner for the indication that claims 2-4, 6-12 and 16-22 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. To that end, Applicants have placed the limitation of claim 2 into claim 1, thereby placing claim 1 in condition for allowance and cancelled claim 2. Further, Applicants have placed claims 6 and 16 in independent form by the incorporation of the elements of claim 1 therein. Applicants having placed claims 1, 6 and 16 in condition for allowance, Applicants submit that claims 3, 4, 6-12 and 16-22 are now in condition for allowance, which is hereby respectfully requested.

For the foregoing reasons, Applicants submit that no combination of the cited references teaches, discloses or suggests the subject matter of the amended claims. The pending claims are therefore in condition for allowance, and Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of all rejections and allowance of the claims.

In the event Applicants have overlooked the need for an extension of time, an additional extension of time, payment of fee, or additional payment of fee, Applicants hereby conditionally petition therefor and authorize that any charges be made to Deposit Account No. 20-0095, TAYLOR & AUST, P.C.

Should any question concerning any of the foregoing arise, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at (260) 897-3400.

Respectfully submitted,



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CERTIFICATE OF MAILING

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service as first class mail in an envelope addressed to: MS Amendment, Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450, on: March 9, 2006.

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Name of Registered Representative



Signature

March 9, 2006

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